



May 9, 2025

The Honorable Kim Reynolds
Office of the Governor
Iowa State Capitol
1007 East Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA, 50319

RE: Veto Request for House File 928

Dear Governor Reynolds,

On behalf of Verified Voting, a nonpartisan nonprofit organization, I write to request a veto on House File 928. Verified Voting's mission is to strengthen democracy for all voters by promoting the responsible use of technology in elections. Since our founding in 2004 by computer scientists, we have acted on the belief that the integrity and strength of our democracy rely on citizens' trust that each vote is counted as cast. We support the use of voter-verified paper ballots that are tabulated by scanners, then used in routine tabulation audits, and, when appropriate, recounts to check the results.

HF 928 limits recounts to contests with a very narrow margin and disallows campaign-funded recounts in contests with wider margins. While limiting taxpayer-funded recounts is reasonable, prohibiting recounts in contests with wider margins is problematic. Significant miscounts, though rare, do occur—such as in the 2006 Pottawattamie County, Iowa primary election, where a hand recount reversed the initial results in nine contested races.¹

The bill also requires ballots to be recounted with the same equipment used for the original count. As in Pottawattamie, manual recounts provide an important check on election results. While HF 928 allows for manual recounts under "extraordinary circumstances"—including when the tabulators fail—it limits their use to general assembly or local elections. Close federal or statewide contests would be ineligible for manual recounts, even if a machine error occurred. Iowa's manual audit might detect the problem, but it cannot impact the election results. By limiting when and how recounts can occur, HF 928 risks undermining both voter confidence and the integrity of Iowa's elections.

We respectfully request your veto on HF 928.

Sincerely,

C.Jay Coles
Deputy Director of Legislative Affairs

¹ Bert Dalmer, "Polk County recorder to contest election," *Des Moines Register*, June 24, 2006, available at: <https://www.votersunite.org/article.asp?id=6607>